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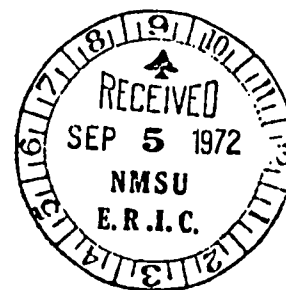
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ABSTRACT

Rural development in Canada is discussed in terms of finding a rural development strategy in this report. The prerequisites for a rural development strategy are enumerated; these prerequisites include (1) the development of an agency at the Federal level with the responsibility for defining national strategy, (2) the formulation and implementation of development strategies at the provincial level by provincial governments, and (3) the provision of channels through which sufficient flows of relevant information and research can pass between the government and those involved in the planning process. Possible criticisms (i.e., that the strategies are too general or are not sufficiently realistic) are examined. Other topics discussed in this report are rural development in the context of national development, the role of public participation in such a strategy, and the immediate situation. Also discussed are factors which will likely affect the future of rural Canada, for example, technological advances will increase the potential productivity per unit of labor, accelerate the process of urbanization, and enable the movement of large volumes of information considerable distances almost instantaneously. New migration trends are also expected. A listing of members of the Canadian Council on Rural Development and studies made by the Council are included in the appendices. (NQ)

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TOWARD A DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
FOR CANADA

FOURTH REPORT AND REVIEW
CANADIAN COUNCIL ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT
OTTAWA 1972

Re006369

The Honourable Jean Marchand, P.C., M.P.,
Minister of Regional Economic Expansion,
Ottawa, Ontario.

Dear Mr. Marchand:

I have the honour of submitting to
you the Fourth Report and Review of the Canadian
Council on Rural Development.

It is hoped this Report will make a
significant contribution to the national debate
on rural development policies.

Yours sincerely,


Marcel Daneau

Ottawa, May 1972.

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INTRODUCTION

The central function of the Canadian Council on Rural Development is to advise the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion on rural development programming and policy. The Council is also charged in its mandate with two other ancillary functions, namely, to provide a forum for the discussion of rural development issues and to facilitate public understanding of Canada's rural development programme.

Members of the Council are selected by the Minister because of their knowledge and experience of Canadian rural problems. At regular meetings of the Council this knowledge and experience are brought together and through debate and discussion a consensus is reached on specific issues. Members are particularly attentive to ensure that their already considerable understanding of the rural problems is up-dated and objectified, on a continuing basis, by first-hand encounters with rural people in every part of Canada and by consultation, not only with legislators and officials responsible for shaping rural development policies, but with field workers charged with implementation of those policies.

Since the time of its last report, the Council has held meetings in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; in Truro, Nova Scotia; in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island; in Edmonton, Alberta; and in St. John's and Fogo Island, Newfoundland.

On each occasion, members have toured the area in which they have met and visited farms, processing plants, ship yards, schools, and other kinds of development projects, particularly those in which DREE is involved, to see for themselves what is being done to develop rural resources. They have talked with farmers and fishermen, and with their wives and their families to get the real "feel" of the problems facing rural Canadians. They have met with and closely questioned, Ministers and Deputy Ministers in the provinces, and with officials at both federal and provincial levels regarding the policies that have been devised and are being devised to help solve those problems.

Apart from its regular meetings, the Council has, on two occasions since the appearance of its last report, provided the setting in which members of knowledgeable and concerned groups have been able to discuss a range of rural development issues.

The first of these occasions was a Conference on Rural and Regional Development Issues which the Council sponsored jointly with the Canadian Economics Association. This conference, hosted by the Government of Manitoba, was held in Winnipeg. Papers on a wide range of development issues were presented by experts from all parts of Canada and from the U.S.A., and in open discussion, analysed and reviewed by the two hundred or so economists, sociologists, public servants, and development personnel who attended.¹

The second such occasion was a seminar held at the Institut Co-opératif Desjardins at Lévis, Québec. This meeting was arranged by an ad hoc advisory group of members involved in making a special study of local development associations and groups, and was attended by twenty-nine representatives of such participatory bodies from all parts of the country.

The Council places great value on the kind of person-to-person contacts just described, with concerned academics, legislators and officials, with people active in rural development associations at local level, and above all, with farmers and fishermen themselves and with their families. *There can be no substitute for the insights which can be derived from this kind of first-hand investigation.*

At the same time, it must be recognized that the problems facing rural people can often be traced to complex economic and social causes, of which too little is known. For this reason, the Council undertakes a programme of ongoing study and research into rural problems.

From the visits it has made to rural areas in various parts of Canada, from discussions with farmers and fishermen, and with concerned officials at federal and provincial levels, from organized encounters such as the Winnipeg Conference and the Lévis Seminar, from the research specifically undertaken on its behalf, the thirty or so members of the Council have derived a basis of experience and a range of insights which are submitted as the main substance of this Report and Review.²

1 The proceedings of this conference will be available shortly.

2 For a listing of CCRD's membership, see page 29.

CHAPTER I

RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Although the Canadian Council on Rural Development is overtly charged with responsibilities regarding development in one particular sector of our national life, members have become more and more convinced, as they have examined the problems of development in Canada, that there are considerable difficulties in trying to compartmentalize what is essentially one integral process. It is interesting to note that the CCRD in its Second Report and Review (1968) presented to the Honourable Jean Marchand, then Minister of Forestry and Rural Development, stated:

"we are led to reject the more restricted meaning of the term 'rural development'. We prefer to speak of 'regional development' which includes both rural and urban districts."

Acceptance of this kind of thinking by the Department itself was shortly to be signalled by a change of title to Department of Regional Economic Expansion.

The Council has recently been discussing with the Minister the possibility of modifying and clarifying its own mandate to reflect, in the same way, a recognition that rural development cannot be considered usefully in isolation, but only in the context of balanced regional development. *This, in the Council's view, is not a matter of mere words but acceptance of an important point of principle.*

Rural development, for example, cannot be considered in isolation from regional development and regional development involves urban development. Rural and urban sectors are, in fact, intimately interconnected by a network of social and economic relationships.

The complex nature of modern methods of production decrees that development in any one sector or region can only be predicated on development in other sectors or regions; therefore, to try and understand the development of one particular sector or region, or to make plans for such development in vacuo, without adequate consideration being given to related sectors or regions, is not likely to prove effective.¹

This may seem self-evident enough and yet strategies of urban development are continuously implemented giving only marginal consideration to the effects of such development in the rural hinterland. Plans are made for development in one region while giving insufficient thought to what are likely to be the repercussions of those plans on other regions.

Perhaps, the most damaging kind of compartmentalization of the total development process encountered by the Council has been that which separates economic development from social development. *In the view of the Council, economic development and social development are not only closely and intimately interconnected, but properly regarded, they are in fact two aspects of the same process.*

Again, this may seem self-evident. Nevertheless, as things are, many of Canada's current development programmes take the form of economic intervention which gives little heed to the social dimension. Conversely other development programmes, emphasizing the social aspects, seem put together with only marginal concern for economic realities.

The Council sees the development process as a socio-economic one. This is far more than a mere semantic consideration. For very practical reasons, this realization must be built into all our thinking on development matters from the start, as should be the realization that development in one region or one sector is intimately connected to changes in other regions and sectors. This, of course, does not signify that in particular contexts, academic for example, we cannot talk of economic development as such or social development as such. Nor does it imply that development strategies cannot be put together for particular regions or particular sectors.

1 It must be stressed that development in the CCRD view does not necessarily signify only positive economic growth. The Council's Brief to the Special Senate Committee on Poverty is explicit: "A properly rounded development plan, as well as assigning equitable and judicious weights to urban and rural development, will complement positive development in growth sectors with planned and co-ordinated phase-out in sectors where potential is diminishing. This implies that relocation programmes and training and retraining programmes must be assigned central importance as integral components of any overall development plan, not tacked on later as peripheral after thoughts." CCRD Brief to the Special Senate Committee on Poverty. (CCRD, Ottawa, 1970) p. 25.

What is important is that full recognition be given to the close relationship between economic and social development and between development programming in one region or sector and other regions and sectors. As a corollary it is important that economists and sociologists and specialists from a host of other disciplines¹ accept the necessity of working in close collaboration in development matters so that their individual perspectives complement each other, and that those responsible for formulating development plans for particular sectors or regions accept the position that such plans should not be considered in isolation from the wider development context.

This recognition by the Council of the essential "unity" of the development process is complemented by a recognition that development in Canada can only take place in a framework determined by large scale and long-term economic forces and social movements which are world wide in their effect.

In the Council's opinion, nothing is more important than that we recognize and understand these factors.²

If we fail to do so, we shall not escape their impact but will be left with no option but to react to them passively on an ad hoc basis as and when they impinge upon us.

If, on the other hand, we improve our capacity to understand these strongly determinative underlying factors our response may then take the form of rational and realistic strategies for the attainment of clearly defined goals. *This is, in the Council's submission, an essential aspect of development planning.*

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- 1 The CCRD-CEA Conference in Winnipeg was marked by widespread recognition that a rounded view of Canada's rural and regional development problems demanded inputs not only from economists but sociologists, psychologists, ecologists and physical scientists.
 - 2 In point of fact, our understanding of these factors is dangerously limited. Several speakers concerned themselves with this point at the CCRD-CEA Conference in Winnipeg. Dr. Gunther Schramm, for example, contrasted the vast amounts of money we spend on programmes intended to accelerate the development process with our meagre knowledge of the nature of the process itself.
Dr. John Graham (President of the CEA) commented that government seemed to "lack a learning mechanism."
Dr. Zenon Sametz stated that in his view the responsibility for learning from what we do rested jointly on government and the academic community. There was general agreement that effective evaluation of development programming by government was currently the exception rather than the rule and that this deficiency was particularly damaging.

It seems reasonable to envisage a wide family of such development strategies - at the level of individual industries and productive sectors, at the level of the province, possibly at region level where the region is taken as comprising a small grouping of provinces¹, and, most importantly, at the national level. Because of the essential unity of the development process, these strategies, if they were to be effective, would necessarily be interrelated and reconcileable with each other. A strategy of national development would not be, as it were, an aggregate of concomitant plans, nor would it represent a Procrustean framework to which provincial strategies must conform. *The main point is that both should exist, should be made known, and should relate functionally to each other.*²

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- 1 It may well be, for example, that in the Prairies and in the Maritimes, the most apt unit be the region comprising a group of provinces rather than the individual province.
 - 2 Council members, in encounters with farm and fisherfolk in various parts of the country, have been particularly struck by the damaging climate of doubt and uncertainty with regard to their future in which many of them live. The psychological security of rural families rests on their ability to make meaningful plans regarding their future. They cannot make these plans if they are uncertain what government intends to do. Hence the importance of development strategies not just being formulated but being made known. This first-hand observation is validated in a recent empiric study of rural families in Ontario undertaken by a Council member, Dr. Helen Abell. See Helen Abell, Rural Families and Their Homes. (School of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Waterloo, 1971).

CHAPTER II

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In the Council's view, the process by which these rational, future-oriented development strategies are developed and modified is as important as their actual substance. The Council is thoroughly committed to maximizing participation by concerned publics in the formulation and implementation of development strategies or plans likely to affect them. This principle is regarded as having validity in the context not only of a national development strategy, but in the evolution of related development strategies for individual provinces, for regional groupings of provinces, for municipalities, for rural areas, for sectors, and for particular industries.

Certainly, much has been done in recent years in this direction by government. Canada Agriculture, for example, went to considerable lengths to involve all sectors of agriculture in devising the strategies which were debated at the Agricultural Congress of 1970.¹ Such disparate agencies as the Parks Branch of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the Canadian Radio and Television Commission rely heavily on public hearings in formulating policy.

The Department of Regional Economic Expansion, the Secretary of State Department, and several provincial governments deliberately finance local citizens' groups which are intended to articulate the needs and aspirations of particular disadvantaged populations. The continued existence of advisory bodies such as the Economic Council of Canada, the Atlantic Development Council and the Canadian Council on Rural Development is evidence of recognition by government of the need for wider public participation in formulating policy.

¹ The Council's submission to the Congress is obtainable on request from the CCRD Secretariat.

But there is a need for more than the recognition of a principle.

In the first place, there is a simple need for more representative participatory bodies. Too many Canadians, many of them disadvantaged, have no such vehicle of participation readily available to them, however much they may wish to participate. There may well be justification for wider government involvement in financing such additional bodies, or, indeed, in widening the membership of existing bodies.¹

Secondly, government - at all levels - must learn to operate more naturally in what might be called "the participatory mode".

In a survey of around a hundred or so local development associations undertaken by CCRD, a majority of the groups cited as their main problem, lack of government response and "red-tape".²

Government must progressively take on the nature of an open process rather than a closed one. It should operate on the basic assumption that the vast range of information it has put together at public expense is public property, except in rare situations where "confidentiality" can be justified, rather than operating on the converse assumption, as it now tends to, that government information is, by definition, confidential unless expressly designated as suitable for public scrutiny.

What is envisaged by CCRD in this regard goes much further than a simple one-way flow of information from government to people.

"Such a policy can only be restricted to telling the people what government has decided to do and what their role is in implementing government decisions.

In the CCRD view, this is not enough. A fully adequate policy on information must conceive of communication as a two-way flow between the people and their government, facilitating a proper response of government decision-making processes to popular needs and aspiration on a continuing basis

Of course, material and other practical restraints will place limits on this kind of response. The justification of these inevitable short-comings would be another function of government information policy. This, surely, is what is meant by a 'dialogue between government and people'. "³

- 1 The CCRD Seminar at Lévis, Québec, as has been mentioned, brought together representatives of twenty-nine local voluntary development associations. Much of what is recommended here regarding the value of local participation in development derives from this meeting. A separate report of this meeting, it is expected, will shortly be issued.
- 2 Results of this survey are available on request from the CCRD Secretariat.
- 3 Brief to the Special Senate Committee on Poverty. (CCRD, Ottawa, 1970) pp. 28-29.

Thirdly, if we are to give meaning to the principle of genuine and positive public participation in the formulation of development strategies and public policies generally, we must establish accepted processes and even institutions whereby this participation can take place.

This latter point is of particular importance.

Participation must go further than the mere submission of written or verbal briefs by individuals or groups to government regarding their views on policy issues. It entails an obligation on the part of government not only to respond, but to justify its response. A bland assurance that the brief will be "taken into consideration" is not enough. And yet, thus far, little consideration has been given, by government to institutionalizing a process by which this obligation can be discharged.

The experience of the CCRD itself lends support to this contention. The Council is supported both financially and in terms of staff by the Department of Regional Economic Expansion. The Minister and the staff of the Department certainly give consideration to representations by the Council. However, there exists no regularized process by which the Council can obtain "feed-back" from the Minister or the Department as to whether or not or to what degree recommendations made by the Council are to be acted upon.

The Lévis Seminar organized by the Council, attended by representatives of twenty-nine participatory citizens' groups concerned with local and regional development, provided evidence that many of these bodies, operating at grass-roots level, had been, to some extent, alienated by a frequent lack of response from various levels of government.

The problem is apparently one which hampers citizen participation in government at local, regional and national level.

What is more frustrating is that while government certainly gives the impression of being anxious to hear what the people think - financial support of both CCRD and the local groups by government is evidence of this - lack of adequate response is often interpreted as signifying the exact reverse.¹

If the acceptance by government of an obligation to respond thoughtfully to submissions made to it by representative bodies is one of the ground rules of "participatory democracy" another would be the

1 Nothing stultifies local initiatives as much as lack of response from government.

An example: At the outset of "the ARDA era" scores of rural ARDA groups sprung up in rural Canada, notably in the Maritimes. Expectations and enthusiasm were high. Apparent lack of interest by government brought disillusionment. The vast majority of these groups have now expired.

establishment of a set of criteria by which could be judged the right of any group making submissions to government to be regarded as a bona fide participatory body. Similarly, firm criteria would have to be evolved to establish eligibility for possible government financing.

This problem received considerable attention at the Lévis Seminar. There was general agreement that the criteria to be applied would, in themselves, be fairly straightforward, concerned with such issues as financial probity and genuine representativeness.

Discussion at the Seminar, in fact, focussed not so much on what the criteria should be but who should apply them. There was general agreement that, in spite of the fact that these criteria were to establish eligibility for government funding, government should not be the sole agency to apply the criteria. Such a situation it was thought would inevitably set a premium on over-ready subservience with government policies. It was considered that government, although it might be involved in establishing the criteria in question, should delegate responsibility for applying them to some politically neutral body, or alternatively to a regulatory committee established by the development associations themselves.

Clearly, the mere assertion by a group that it "speaks for" a much larger group or population is not a sufficient criterion for its submissions, albeit put forward overtly in the name of the larger population, to be assigned any significant role in the process of formulating a development strategy or any other policy.

If participatory groups such as the local development associations are to be "given their say" in framing development policy, what are the implications so far as the role and status of traditional elected representatives at federal, provincial and municipal levels? Is there a danger of diluting or downgrading their importance? Because they have been elected by a majority of the residents in their constituencies, their claim to "speak for" their constituencies is incontestable. To the maximum degree possible therefore there should be a direct and intimate involvement of elected representatives in the formulation of any development plan likely to affect the lives of their constituents. This should present no particular problem when the representative is a member of the same party as the government taking prime responsibility for the plan in question. When this is not the case some fairly obvious problems arise. But with goodwill on the part of all involved and recognition of the fact that the success of the plan may depend upon obtaining the widest possible public endorsement, an attempt must be made to find a solution to these problems.

CHAPTER III

SOME POSSIBLE CRITICISMS EXAMINED

To recapitulate, the Council is saying that, the development process is indivisible, that although, in some contexts, it may be convenient to talk of economic development and social development and rural development and urban development as if they were independent of each other, in reality they are inextricably inter-connected, as is development in one part of Canada related to development in other parts of Canada.

The Council sees the development of Canada as a whole as taking place within a framework established by long-term factors many of which are largely beyond our control. Some of these factors, such as the threat of exponentially increasing world population and shrinking world supplies of food and other raw materials may not impinge upon us for another ten or twenty years. Some, as for example, the tendency of the major trading nations to form into common markets or customs unions may have more immediate impact. We have before us a relatively simple choice. On the one hand we may choose to react passively to these factors on an ad hoc basis, making whatever accommodation we can with them as and when they impinge on us. On the other hand, we may strive to control them or, where this is not possible, adapt to them by means of rational long-term development strategies intended to maximize the probability of achieving national goals while minimizing the human distress involved in the adaption process.¹

1 In the Council's view, simple maximisation of GNP is totally inadequate as a major national goal. The CCRD's brief to the Canadian Agricultural Congress is clear on this point: "If our thinking is to be limited by boundaries of conventional wisdom, we can only remain confined to the past. We lose our future. It is imperative that we submit to critical scrutiny the assumption that economic growth, per se, must remain our prime national goal. Society, after all, is not a business. We must give consideration to the notion that our national policies - agricultural, rural, urban, industrial - should be aimed not only at increasing private and national income, but at enhancing the quality of life and enriching human experience." CCRD Statement to the Canadian Agricultural Congress, Ottawa, (CCRD, Ottawa, 1970) p. 20.

These strategies applicable to particular provinces, groupings of provinces, and economic sectors, would necessarily relate one to another and also to a co-ordinative and unifying national development plan. In order to maximize the involvement of those concerned by these strategies in their implementation it would be essential to maximize their participation in shaping them.

We recognize however, that several criticisms may be levelled at such a position as this.

It may be asserted, for example, that the interrelated family of development strategies we have proposed in fact would constitute a massive exercise in authoritarian planning. It may also be suggested by some that such an exercise is inherently "anti-business".

Civil servants as it is, run into quite a few problems in seeking to establish guide lines for federal-provincial collaboration. The participatory approach that CCRD recommends, it may be objected, would necessitate consultation with numerous other groups and would certainly render the civil servants' task more complex.

Certainly what we have recommended might be criticised as too "general", or not sufficiently realistic. Let us examine these criticisms one by one.

In the first place, it must be admitted that the word "plan" and "strategy" are to some extent interchangeable, and that possibly because the preparation of national economic plans was adopted first by communist states, the word "planning" does carry, to our Canadian ears, a connotation of authoritarianism. And, indeed, in a situation in which plans are devised solely by government and handed down as "faits accomplis" to the population at large such a charge might be entirely valid. *But it would be an essential characteristic of the plans or strategies proposed by CCRD that those who are to be affected by them participate in their formulation. It is difficult to see how such a procedure could fairly be categorized as authoritarian.*

Nor, is there any reason why the kind of development strategies proposed should be in any way "anti-business". The participatory principle would ensure that private business would have a very important part to play in shaping these strategies. *Indeed, because business operates best and most profitably in situations of relative security and certainty, there is every reason to assume that what is proposed here would be more helpful to the interests of private enterprise than prejudicial.*

It is expected that the evolution of a complex of interrelated regional and sectoral development strategies, involving a high measure of participation by organizations representing all concerned groups, would impose a new range of difficult and demanding tasks upon civil servants of federal and provincial governments. However, Canada is fortunate in the generally high level of her public servants and there is little doubt that they would be equal to the challenge, although there may emerge a need for

some "in-service" training of those public servants unfamiliar with what we have termed "the participatory mode".

Finally, as has been noted, there is no doubt it may be objected that what has thus far been suggested is too general and not sufficiently specific; that it is concerned more with process than with objective policy recommendations. After all the call for more explicit planning, more consultation and more interjurisdictional co-ordination has been heard before. What is needed, it may be said, is not so much a blue-print for the new Jerusalem as some practical tips on "what to do next Monday morning".

A lesson derived from the CCRD-CEA Conference on Rural and Regional Development Policy issues is relevant here. Discussion at the Conference brought out very clearly the difference between the time perspectives of the functionaries charged with implementation of development programmes and the time perspectives of economists. The civil servants not unexpectedly were more concerned with immediate than with long-term problems, tending to characterize this concern as "practical" and "realistic". The more long-term perspective favored by academics was criticized by some civil servants as unhelpfully "idealistic". Conversely, several academics made it clear that, in their view, the civil servants were dangerously over-concerned with the ad hoc. This kind of polarization is regrettable.

What Canada's development effort is most in need of is continuity - a continuity finding form in strategies reflecting understanding of the deep-seated and long-term factors affecting Canada as a whole. What is most urgent, most pressing at the present time, is that we move with all speed to establish processes through the instrumentality of which we may be able to evolve those strategies.

This obviously does not mean that in the interim we do nothing. We must do what we can in the short-term to deal with our immediate problems, with the firm mental proviso that this kind of expedient is a holding operation, valid only until we have developed the processes and the capacities to devise the long-term strategies of which we stand in need.

One last likely objection we may take account of, in view of the stress laid by the Council on the value of public participation in the formulation of development plans and strategies, might take the form of simple scepticism regarding the efficacy of such participation.

It is entirely true that the participatory mode of proceeding is, still, for many of those involved in the business of government something of an innovation. Traditionally, the task of preparing programmes of development for particular areas of the country or particular sectors of the economy has been the exclusive task of federal or provincial civil servants. There have been obvious successes. There have also been some obvious failures. Broadly, the record of success has not been so consistent as to rule out the possibility that other methods might not prove more efficient.

Direct observation by the Council points to the conclusion that where there has been a real input from local people in putting together a development plan it works excellently. Two examples may be cited.

Census Division 14 in the region of Edson, Alberta, is the site of an imaginative package of interrelated economic and social development programmes funded under ARDA. Discussion with local people has convinced Council members that the success achieved is largely attributable to the high level of citizen participation in formulating and implementing these programmes.

Fogo Island off the coast of Newfoundland is another locality visited by members of the Council where there is ample evidence of citizen participation being a major factor in a programme of social and economic development producing real dividends.

The Council's preference for fuller public participation in the formulation of development strategies is based on two assumptions, deriving from the Council's first-hand experience; firstly, that if the people whom it concerns participate in the shaping of a development strategy they will accept it, get behind it, and do what they can to make it work, and secondly, that public participation will augment rather than dilute the expertise going into that strategy.

This latter point is particularly important. In a developed and educated democracy such as today's Canada, the Civil Service exercises no monopoly of information or wisdom. The universities, the professions, private business, voluntary associations and organizations of all kinds also constitute very considerable repositories of trained intelligence and skill. In the kind of participatory process envisaged by CCRD the task of the Civil Service would be not only to make its own contribution but to orchestrate, as it were, the contributions of other involved groups and agencies.

A Canadian rural development strategy, as has been emphasized, if it is to be effective, can only be put together as part of a complex of related development strategies and only as a result of full participation by all those who would be affected by it. The related strategies have not, as yet at least, been evolved. Nor do the mechanisms necessary to give effect to the required public participation exist at the present time. Therefore, it is impossible to predict with any precision what form that rural development strategy might take.

However, we will be moving nearer to formulation of that strategy if we can first define some of the institutional innovations of which we stand in need and some of the questions which we must face.

CHAPTER IV

PREREQUISITES FOR A RURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

1. Some Institutional Needs

The Council sees a rural development strategy as but one component - albeit an essential component - in an overall strategy of national development. For practical reasons, responsibility for definition of this national strategy would necessarily be allocated to one agency at the Federal level. This agency would be concerned not only with generating initiatives of its own but also with co-ordinating the planning activities of other Federal jurisdictions playing a role in social and economic development and of those provincial jurisdictions involved in the same kind of activity.

The Department of Regional Economic Expansion is an agency within the structure of the federal government already engaged in fulfilling such a role. The Department has been charged with a co-ordinative role with regard to the programmes of other federal departments in the area of regional development. Also in the regional development context it has established a working relationship with development agencies in the various provincial governments.

Currently the Department, in conjunction with the provincial governments, is involved in preparing a range of provincial and regional development strategies affecting a large part of Canada.

What is suggested here is that the Department's prime responsibility should go beyond this and should include the formulation of an overall national development strategy. The Department's present attempt to affect the location and direction of growth within the national economy by intervening only in those areas where economic activity is low is not likely

to prove effective. On this basis whatever comparative gains are made in the low activity areas may be nullified by further rounds of autonomous economic growth in high activity areas such as Toronto. If the Department's operations are intended to have impact at the national level, its planning perspective must necessarily become national in scope. Prime responsibility for formulation and implementation of development strategies at the provincial level in the Council's view would be more aptly vested with the provincial governments.

This does not mean that the Department would have no role to play in regard to shaping provincial development strategies.

There is no way of simply aggregating ten provincial development strategies into one national development strategy. In the first place, it would be extremely unlikely that ten provincial strategies could be "reconciled", one with another, to make economic sense without considerable modifications in all of them. Secondly, just as Canada as a nation has interests and involvements which transcend provincial concerns, a national development strategy would necessarily reflect national goals transcending provincial goals. This latter consideration might also indicate modifications in provincial strategies.

Inevitably because of the salience of the federal-provincial issue in Canada there might be some dispute at the federal-provincial interface as what powers and responsibilities would be assigned to the two levels of government.

Several policy areas traditionally federal, nevertheless have differential regional effects. Monetary policy, fiscal policy, tariff policy - even overseas aid policy - can be manipulated to favour one area or another. In such cases as these the Federal role could be expected to continue to be determinative with Provincial governments urging their own interests.

National security and foreign policy would seem, *prima facie*, to be areas more remote from Provincial concern but which nevertheless might be conceived as having "development" effects.

The main point is that with regard to the shaping of provincial development strategies, prime initiative and responsibility is more aptly lodged with the jurisdictional level most closely involved with implementation, i.e., the provincial government. In relation to these provincial strategies the federal department's chief responsibility would be co-ordinative. *The proper central concern of the federal department would be a new one, that is the definition of the overall national development strategy of which we stand in such dire need.*

Currently there are considerable variations between the provinces in their capacity to evolve long-term development strategies. Some provinces for financial reasons have been unable to assemble the required team of planners. In such cases it would be justified for the federal government to provide funding in order to ensure that joint federal-provincial planning of development strategies is a reality.

In the Council's view, the participation of local development associations and other participatory bodies in the joint federal-provincial process of evolving provincial and regional development strategies is of equivalent value as participation by provincial government planners.

Therefore, again, there is justification for support of such bodies by federal funding, when appropriate, dispensed via provincial governments. This financial support would have application at local "grass-roots" level and also in relation to provincial associations of local groups.

As has been noted earlier, the mere existence of these participatory bodies is not enough. If they are to fulfill the important role of which they are capable in formulating development strategies, processes must be established and accepted whereby they are genuinely enabled to do so.

The development planning process we have been discussing is largely an exercise in the selection of options. If it is to be a rational process it can only be entered into on the basis of as complete information as it is possible to obtain regarding just exactly what options are open and what are their full implications - not only in terms of dollar costs, but in terms of amenities and other intangibles. Therefore, it is a clear and inescapable responsibility of federal and provincial governments to make freely available all information they may have which might have application in this context, and, in those cases where crucial information is lacking, when possible, to develop it.

How far are we from the kind of situation we have been recommending?

The answer is that we are very much nearer than many might think.

For example, the present government has, as has been noted, assigned to one Department - Regional Economic Expansion - a central role in development planning. The Department has been charged with a co-ordinative role in relation to other federal departments. It has accepted the notion of joint federal-provincial planning as is evidenced by the joint planning committees established in every province.

The Canada NewStart Programmes set up in various parts of the country, the stress on social development programming in the Special Areas Agreements, demonstrate at least a recognition by the Department of the relation between economic and social development.

The federal government and certain provincial governments have accepted it as a legitimate responsibility to provide citizens' participatory bodies with funding and are providing it, although not, as yet at any rate, on a programme basis.

Acceptance by the federal government of the Report of the Task Force on Information would seem to indicate acceptance of the principle that a free and full flow of information is an essential prerequisite of

participatory democracy. In fact, therefore, the Canadian Council on Rural Development is not calling for any radical change of direction. There is evidence that, in many respects, government has already begun to move in the direction we have indicated. What is needed is that we move with more clarity of purpose and with more speed.

It is not enough that such principles as those we have been considering be recognized on the level of theory. It is a matter of urgency that these principles be built into government programming in terms of every day practice, and that their impact is felt at the "grass-roots" level.

2. Importance of Adequate Information and Research

One point in the foregoing which merits amplification relates to information.

The effectiveness of any development strategy will depend to a large extent on how complete and how accurate is the body of information upon which it is based.

That is one reason why the Council looks for a much freer flow of information from government to all those involved in the planning process and, indeed, to the public in general. One critically important category of information, in this context, concerns the evaluation of past and continuing programmes of development. Although Canada has expended vast sums over the years on various programmes of economic development, very little has apparently been spent on "learning as we go". If we are to move toward a situation whereby new development policies are framed only after a rational analysis of the success and failures of past policies more funds must be assigned to programme evaluation.

It is important not only that such programme evaluations take place but that their results should be made public. Such an innovation might not be enthusiastically welcomed by those responsible for the programmes. However, in this kind of situation neither administrative convenience nor political expediency can become the prime criteria of decision. If the public is to provide the funds for such programmes, then surely, the public has a right to know how efficiently those funds are being used.

One of the most striking findings brought to light by the Council's visits to various parts of rural Canada over the last year was the very low level of information existing among rural people regarding the programmes of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion. This is particularly so with regard to ARDA. Many rural people are under the quite mistaken impression that ARDA has been phased out altogether. There is ample justification here for a major programme of public education.¹

1 The Farm Radio Forum which was discontinued in Canada, in 1964 was a Canadian innovation which has been adapted and adopted in many developing countries in the world. It is ironic that this combination of broadcasting discussion groups and feedback should have been abandoned with rural Canadians who are clearly in need of information regarding the operations of their own government.

But if Canadians are to play the kind of role envisaged for them by the Council in participating in the formulation of development plans affecting them they will need more than information about past and present programmes. They will have to concern themselves with the future.

One of the chief advantages in putting together the development strategies we have been concerned with, is that they permit us to break out of the confining straight-jacket of the ad hoc and the short-term. It is essential therefore, that they should be future-oriented. In order, to prepare them, we need not only the fullest information about our present situation, but the best possible projections we can obtain about the kind of future we shall be dealing with.

It must be emphasized that projections concerning future situations should not be viewed as an exercise in crystal-gazing. Although, obviously, we can never be certain in forecasting future trends, the "state of the art" today permits us nevertheless to make predictions which have a high probability of accuracy. It is of the utmost importance that we improve our Canadian capacity to make intelligent forecasts regarding the kind of world we will be living in, in the next decades. This kind of responsibility may be best discharged by groups and agencies somewhat removed from the operative structure of government such as, for example, the Canadian Council on Rural Development.

The very worst mistake we could make in this context would be to assume that the next twenty years will be pretty well the same as the last twenty years. We are entering a period during which the world economy and human society will go through unprecedentedly rapid change. Canada's survival may largely depend on our ability to recognize the forces operating for change, to do what we can to control them, or, to the degree that we have not the capacity to control them, to adapt to them intelligently.

3. Factors Likely to Affect the Future of Rural Canada

Let us examine some of the factors we shall have to consider in framing a rural development policy for the next decades.

In the first place technology will increase the potential productivity per unit of labor dramatically, not only in industry but in agriculture. Of course we are left with the option of availing ourselves of this capability or not. Traditionally, mankind has always done what he has developed the capacity to do. Therefore, there is a strong presumption that, faced with the choice of whether or not to exploit fully the productivity-enhancing potential of technological innovation, we shall accept rather than reject the technology.

A conjectural study undertaken on behalf of CCRD by Mr. Fraser Symington suggests that the apparent tendency of technology to accelerate the process of urbanization derives from the manner in which we have become accustomed to utilizing technology than from the inherent nature of the

technology itself. Exploited differently, Mr. Symington suggests, technology might serve to enhance the viability of rural communities in regions which today are witnessing an outflow of population.

On the other hand, there are indications that after two centuries of dramatic technological development we are, for the first time, at least considering the possibility of rejecting certain innovations. The supersonic jet transport aircraft is the example that comes most readily to mind, although there are others.

What is perhaps most likely is that, although rejecting some specific innovations, particularly very high cost items of dubious economic value and/or possessed of high pollution potential, we shall accept the main stream of productivity-enhancing innovation. Such an acceptance will almost certainly have the effect of cutting the demand for labor involved directly in industry and agriculture. This in turn will, in all likelihood, result in a very considerable drop in average hours worked per week or increasing early retirement and a continuation of the shift to employment to the service occupations. It will also tend to lead to higher rates of unemployment. In a sense these three possibilities are options. The more we go with any one of these options, the less we have to go with the other two. Whichever option we stress may well be a matter of conscious decision of a part of our overall strategy of national development.

It seems inevitable that the enjoyment of income will less and less be assumed to have a direct relationship to "work". The connection between work and income has been regarded, traditionally, in our society as a close one. Only special groups - the young, the old, the disabled - were exempt from the belief that work was a necessary condition for the enjoyment of income. Such a belief however, would become progressively difficult to maintain in a society at the same time capable of providing a high level of material comfort for all its members while only capable of providing full time employment for half or three-quarters of its "work force".

The "stigma" of unemployment would become a thing of the past.¹ Populations might tend to locate more and more where amenities are most desirable rather than in proximity to job opportunities.

How might these factors affect rural Canada? It seems likely that technological innovation will continue to increase productivity per unit of labour in the primary industries which are the present economic underpinnings of life in rural Canada.

1 For an analysis of the manner in which current and progressively outmoded attitudes to employment and unemployment lead to such wasteful expedients as disguising welfare support programmes as development programmes. See CCRD Brief to the Special Senate Committee on Poverty (CCRD, Ottawa, 1970) pp. 22-24.

Given better job opportunities in the urban setting, this, it can be assumed, in the short term, will result in a continuation of the flow of population from rural areas to the cities. This almost certainly is the reality with which we will be concerned over the next few years.

There are though, several factors which render it unlikely that this trend will continue indefinitely.

It has long been recognized that in economic down-turns the rural-urban flow of population slows down considerably.

In other words many people - not necessarily rural people only - faced with unavoidable unemployment or underemployment prefer residing in a rural rather than an urban setting. As technology permits us, as a nation, to enjoy a continuing, even increasing level of material welfare with a diminishing proportion of the population actively engaged in the work force we can expect the same pattern to become evident.

This counter flow of population from the cities to rural areas might be enhanced by a growing distaste for some of the dysfunctional aspects of urban living - traffic congestion, air pollution, high crime rates and so on.

Another factor which might be assumed to gravitate in the same direction would be our growing ability to move large volumes of information considerable distances almost instantaneously. To live in the rural setting may, in a few years, cease to imply any necessary degree of isolation except in a physical sense.

Of course these predictions might prove to be completely wide of the mark. Our present rather high rates of unemployment may prove to be a temporary aberration not indicative of any long-term trend. New technologies may lead to new industries which will provide sufficient numbers of full time jobs in the cities to absorb not only new entrants to the work force but a continuing flow of rural-to-urban migrants. The same improved technological capacity may enable us at the same time to introduce new means of mass transportation, while at the same time providing us with the means of uncovering the new reserves of non-renewable resources which will be needed to underpin the vastly increased volume of manufacture involved.¹

1 This optimistic set of prognostications finds no support from two recent and highly sophisticated analyses of the direction in which present trends are taking us.

They are The Limits of Growth, produced by the prestigious Club of Rome and Blueprint for Survival prepared by the staff of the Ecologist, a British periodical.

Both predict very firmly that if we continue our commitment to urban industrial growth, exponentially increasing demands of population growth; the productive process on the environment will lead to a complete collapse of human society as we know it early in the next century.

Many of our current social and economic policies would seem to be based on this latter set of assumptions.

In the view of the Council, what is most important is not which set of assumptions are correct, but that the assumptions that Canada does make are based on rational well researched projections utilizing all the expertise that can be mustered, rather than on a bland assumption that "things will carry on much as before". *It is only on the basis of rational projections regarding the future that we can put together the kind of long range development strategies that we should have.*

4. The Immediate Situation

The Council's concern that rural development strategies be conceived as an integral part of a national development plan which assigns due attention to long-term economic and social factors must not be interpreted as signifying any dilution of concern for the here and now problems of rural Canadians.

Council members, while aware of the value most rural Canadians set upon the rural way of life, are also fully acquainted with the dire and pressing immediate problems many of them face.

Research undertaken on the Council's behalf has pointed to the unavoidable conclusion that:

*"Rural people earn less than city people. They have less chance of employment. When employed, they are more likely to be underemployed. Their general level of living is much lower. The health and educational facilities available to them are not of the same standard as those available to urban people. Their housing tends to be older and more crowded and the level of domestic comfort and amenity they enjoy is far lower than it is for urban dwellers."*¹

Members have also spent much time in discussion with grain farmers on the Prairies, with farmers in the Maritimes, with Indians and Métis, with young people in the West undergoing vocational training, with longliner operators in the Newfoundland out-ports, and with lobster fishermen in Prince Edward Island. These discussions have served to highlight grave disadvantages that many rural Canadians suffer in terms of income, employment opportunities and in social services.

The Council has stressed and continues to stress that any equitable and balanced programme of national or regional development must assign priority to alleviating those disadvantages.

The Council therefore welcomes the efforts being made by the Department of Regional Economic Expansion to combat the immediate problems of rural people. The NewStart programmes intended to upgrade the skills

1 CCRD Brief to Special Senate Committee on Poverty (CCRD, Ottawa, 1970) p. 16.

of socially disadvantaged rural people, the range of programmes undertaken in the Interlake area, the comprehensive FRED plans in Prince Edward Island and the Gaspé area in Quebec, utilizing a range of co-ordinated development techniques, the continuing work of PFRA, the new ARDA agreements signed with all ten provinces - these are steps taken by DREE which as a package serve as evidence of a thrust to improve the lot of rural Canadians. And of course, other jurisdictions also have programmes which have been framed with the same intention in mind.

In spite of these programmes many rural people today are plagued with a sense of insecurity regarding their future. They feel that the kind of programmes referred to are more "window-dressing" than the substance of a real commitment to combat rural problems. Few have heard of NewStart. ARDA, although it may exist on paper, is assumed by most rural people to have been abandoned.

The insecurity we have noted is not solely in regard to their own immediate economic problems, but in regard to the future destinies of their children, in regard to the viability of the communities of which they are a part, in regard to the continuance of the rural way of life as such.¹

It is for this reason that we have stressed the need for strategies of development affecting the rural sector, which not only serve to remedy immediate distress but also provide a blue-print indicating what part rural people can expect to play in Canada's future.

1 This contention has been thoroughly documented. In a recent study by Dr. Helen Abell of the University of Waterloo - based on a survey referred to previously. It was found that 53 per cent of the "continuing" Ontario farm families - that is families who had not changed residence over a period of nine years - said they saw no future for "farm families such as theirs" (See Helen Abell, Ibid).

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Most Canadians today are well aware that their country is currently going through one of the most dramatic and perhaps the most significant periods of crises in its history. Many long accepted institutions, even our political constitutions, are being called into question and subject to urgent re-examination. Basic political and social attitudes are in a state of flux. We are anxiously searching for new national purposes and goals, a new sense of national identity.

At the same time we are seeking to redefine our international position in a world which itself is currently experiencing wide spread unrest. The problems caused by the global revolution of rising expectations, rapidly increasing population and a limited, even diminishing stock of world resources can only lead, in all parts of the world, to growing turbulence and discontent.

Canadians are by no means insulated from these problems.

Rural Canadians, in particular, find themselves going through a period of doubt and uncertainty with regard to the future which, to many is confusing and troublesome.

And yet, in the view of the Council there are grounds for real optimism. Canadians are fortunate in the resources with which their country has been blessed. Not only is Canada richly endowed with a wide variety of natural resources, her people, too, represent a unique store of energy, skill and imagination.

These singular advantages are not, of course, in themselves any guarantee of a golden future. But they do provide us with the opportunity, if we exercise reason and discretion, to build a Canada in which a high level of affluence, equitably distributed, serves to enhance the quality of life for all our citizens - white, black or red, French speaking, English speaking, urban or rural.

The achievement of this society, in the Council's view, is unlikely to be the result of simple unplanned and unco-ordinated economic growth, but rather, the result of rational strategies of development put together with full recognition that economic development is intimately connected with social development, that rural development is intimately connected with urban development and so on.

Development, as the Council regards it, is one single indivisible process.

This last point explains why a Council overtly preoccupied only with rural development has in the present report made recommendations which, might seem to go beyond the purely rural area of concern, as narrowly conceived.

In the Council's view it would not be meaningful or useful to propound a strategy of rural development for one province or one region of Canada which was not connected with similar strategies for other provinces or regions and also to an overall rural development strategy for Canada. Nor would it be meaningful or useful to devise rural development strategy which was not part and parcel of a total national development strategy interconnected closely and organically with component strategies for industrial development, population distribution, urban growth and so on.

If these development strategies are to work well they must be accepted. In the Council's view this does not mean that they should be prepared by civil servants and experts within the structures of government and then sold as a package to the public, but rather, that those whom they will affect must, to the maximum degree practicable, be involved in their formulation and implementation.

This will entail widespread aggregation and articulation of needs and expectations, not only via traditional representation at federal and provincial levels but also through voluntary organizations, associations representing sectoral interests and associations concerned with the development of particular areas. If this kind of exercise is to work, two essential conditions must be met. Firstly, the bodies concerned must be able to deploy adequate internal resources to enable them to play their role. Secondly, there must be, readily available to them, sufficient flows of relevant information and data.

Such a nation-wide effort in articulation will only lead to confusion if varying and conflicting demands and recommendations are not brought together, reconciled and harmonized one with another in the form of national development strategies. This task necessarily must devolve upon government - at both levels. In a Federal state such as Canada, what we should expect therefore to emerge from the process are two kinds of strategies - Provincial and Federal.

In the Council's view, prime responsibility for the shaping of such development strategies is best vested with that level of government closest to the "point of delivery".

That is to say that the prime responsibility for shaping and implementing of provincial development strategies - component or overall - should be assigned to the Provincial governments¹, and by the same token, prime responsibility for national development strategies should be recognized as belonging to the Federal government.

In the light of the foregoing the Council recommends to the Honourable Jean Marchand, Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, that:

- A. The Minister should exercise his best efforts in urging the several Provinces, either singly or in collaboration with certain other provinces, to accept the responsibility of framing overall strategies of Provincial, - or Regional - development based on particular sectorial strategies.

Responsibility for implementation of this full range of development strategies should be recognized as appertaining to the Provincial governments.

- B. Respecting the formulation of such Provincial Development strategies the Minister should accept the following responsibilities:
 1. To urge strongly that the Provincial governments establish processes whereby, through the instrumentality of municipal governments, voluntary organizations, sectoral associations, local development associations and so on, concerned populations are enabled to play a significant role in the formulation and implementation of such strategies.
 2. Where need exists, to provide funding so that Provincial governments may develop the capacity to evolve development strategies of the type previously mentioned.
 3. Where need exists to provide fundings to enable Provincial governments to give required financial support to municipal governments, voluntary organizations, local development associations and citizens' groups so that they may develop adequate capacity to participate usefully in formulation and implementation of development strategies.
 4. To provide full and adequate flows of relevant information and data including objective evaluation of existing development

¹ In respect to this responsibility some provinces would surely opt to "go it alone". Others would no doubt prefer to operate within the context of a regional grouping.

programmes, to all groups and agencies involved in the formulation of development strategies and when the need is demonstrated for particular information that is not available to undertake, possibly in collaboration with other Federal agencies, the research required to develop it.

- C. The Minister should also accept as a direct responsibility the formulation of an overall National Development Strategy for Canada. Such a strategy should:
1. Embody as organic components particular strategies dealing with the various sectors of activity.
 2. Assign appropriate emphasis to such aspects as housing, transport, communication, education, population policy, mining, energy policy, northern development, recreation and parks policy.
 3. Reconcile and co-ordinate one with the other, the several Provincial Development Strategies.
 4. Serve to facilitate the co-ordination of the programs of other Federal Departments likely to influence the social and economic development of Canada.
 5. Reflect the fullest practical participation of voluntary organizations and other associations operating at national level.
 6. Serve to achieve national goals and realize national aspirations as expressed through due political process.
 7. Be recognized as subject to continuous modification in the light of changing circumstances, by means of process involving a free flow of relevant information to the public and full participation by the public.

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- * Chairman of the Council
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THE CANADIAN COUNCIL ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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NOTE

- * Studies for public distribution on request**

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- ** Publications to come out in 1972**

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